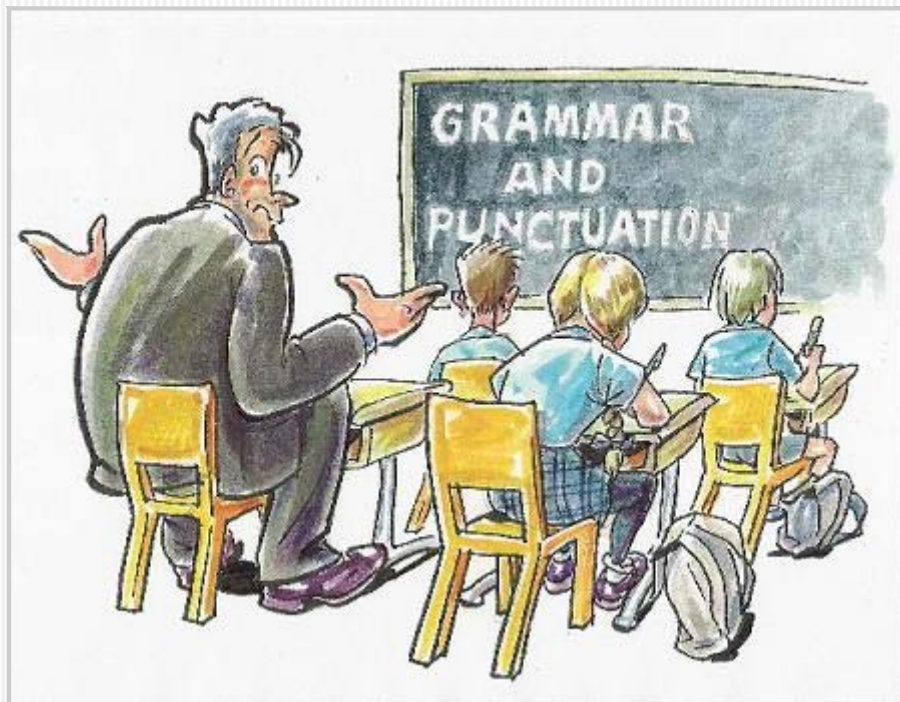


A Fast Track Grammar Review



for EFL Teachers

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What is Grammar? Why do I need to know about it?

Section 1



The Basic Idea

←————→
What it is
and why we need to know about it.

What is Grammar?

Check all the answers that you feel are true.

- A system designed to confuse students and teachers
- An antiquated system of rules that no one uses anymore
- An incomprehensible jumble of rules with too many exceptions
- The first thing to embarrass me in the classroom

If you checked all four responses—you are not alone. This course book is designed to get you up and running—and comfortable with the basics in just a few weeks. Here we go . . .

**Section
1**

What is Grammar?

Different sources define grammar in different ways.

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines *grammar* as:

- 1 a :** the study of the classes of words, their inflections, and their functions and relations in the sentence **b :** a study of what is to be preferred and what avoided in inflection and syntax
- 2 a :** the characteristic system of inflections and syntax of a language **b :** a system of rules that defines the grammatical structure of a language

Are you confused yet? Here's another one:

Ask Jeeves has a "Quick Definition" that reports *grammar* as "studies of the formation of basic linguistic units."



Some grammarians also refer to *descriptive* and *pre-scriptive* grammars. Descriptive grammar refers to the way language is actually used. Prescriptive grammar as the way it experts say it should be used. Consider how you would research how to write a language that has no writing system. First, you might listen to how people speak the language. Then you might also ask the more educated speakers how it should be spoken.

Perhaps the easiest way to get a good grasp of the concept is with the TOEFL© test's use of the word "**Structure**" as the name of the grammar component of the test. Think of grammar as providing the *structure and organization* for language.



Exercise 1.1.

Start thinking about a definition of grammar that is simple and useful. Make it simple enough that you can use it to explain grammar to your students. Write that definition here:

When you finish this book, return to this exercise and see if you wish to improve your definition, or leave it as it is. If you improve it, write it here:

Why?

Why do I need to know grammar?

Check all the answers that you feel are true.

- so I don't get embarrassed in the classroom
- because it is an important part of learning English
- so I can explain it to my students when they ask about it
- to help increase my confidence level in the classroom

Once again, if you checked all the answers, no need to worry.
Most new teachers have all these concerns and more.

The Most Important Reasons

Professional:

A taxi driver needs to know his/her way around town, you need to know your way around grammar. Grammar is an important part of most EFL programs. You need a good grasp of grammar **and** to know how to explain it simply and clearly to your students.

Student Expectations:

Your students will expect you to have an in-depth understanding of grammar, and will quickly lose confidence in you if you can't deliver.

Confidence:

When you are standing in front of a classroom of five, ten, or even twenty or more students—you'll be much more confident when those grammar questions show up. When you least expect it, students can ask you the most obscure questions, often in front of a large class. Won't you feel a lot better knowing you have put in the effort to communicate the basics in a profession and effective manner?



Last of all, remember that EFL students, or their parents, often pay what is for them, a very large amount of money for English lessons. Do a good job for them and deliver the value and quality education they deserve.

Parts of Speech

Section 2



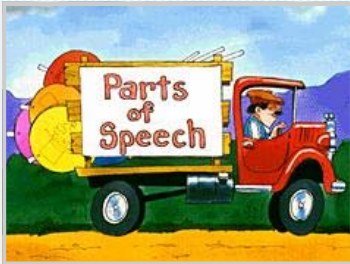
Word Classification



according to grammatical function

2.1 How many *parts of speech* are there?

Check the box with the correct answer



- 8
- 9
- 10
- 12

What are the parts of speech?

Write their names on the lines below

What part of speech is the word *the*?

Write the answer below

Find the answers on the bottom of the next page

Section 2

How many parts of speech are there?

It depends on who you ask. Depending on your source, you will find anywhere from eight to nine, or even more!

Confused yet? Maybe you should be. But, most of all, don't be intimidated by it. Remember if you write the book, you get to decide how many parts of speech there are and it is only a matter of classification—how they are sorted into categories. Some grammarians avoid the subject altogether by not even addressing the issue.

What are the parts of speech?

There is fairly common agreement about nine parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, articles, and interjections. On some lists you will also find determiners instead of articles (articles are in this class) and possibly quantifiers, most of which can also be classed as determiners. It's important to know that many words can be used as more than one part of speech—their classification will depend on how they are used in a sentence.

What is a noun?

A noun is a part of speech that represents the name of a person, animal, place, thing, quality (such as *kindness*), action (*reading*), or measurement (*hour, kilogram*).

Nouns can be categorized as very specific: "proper nouns" - which are capitalized and typically used without an article, and general: "common nouns" - which are typically accompanied with a determiner.



Nouns may also be classified as countable and uncountable (sometimes called count and non-count nouns). Countable nouns can have a plural form.

There are also "collective" nouns: names for groups, such as *committee, government, team, jury, family*, etc.

What is a pronoun?

The most simple forms of pronouns (**personal pronouns**) substitute for nouns and noun phrases. They can be further classed as first, second, and third-person pronouns. (*me, you, them*) They can also be classified by *case* as subjective or objective (used as the subject or object of a sentence). Examples: *I vs. me; she vs. her; they vs. them*.

Pronouns representing noun phrases can make speech or writing easier by representing much longer passages and ideas with a simple pronoun.

Section 2

Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns such as *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*, which by their very use indicate or demonstrate what is being talking about. *Example: I want those.*

If they are used in front of a noun, they are called **demonstrative adjectives**. *Example: I want those pencils.*

Possessive pronouns indicate ownership. That car is *hers*. It is *mine*.

If a pronoun is used to indicate to whom an object belongs—it is called a **possessive adjective**. *Example: That is her car.* Some grammarians would classify such use as determiners—not adjectives.

Reflexive pronouns indicate that the subject receives the action of the verb. *Example: I treated myself to a big piece of chocolate cake.*

Intensive or emphatic pronouns strengthen the action of the subject. *Example: I'll do it myself.*

Interrogative pronouns introduce questions — which, what, who, whom, and whose are examples. *Who did that?*

Relative pronouns are used to tie together related groups of words. Examples are which, what, who, whom and whose. *I went to the doctor that my friend recommended.*



What is an article?

Some times called a noun marker, sometimes classed as a determiner, articles precede nouns. **A** and **an** are called **indefinite articles**, **the** is called the **definite article**.

How about determiners?

Determiners are a broader class of words than articles and include most quantifiers. Determiners can be defined as words that begin noun phrases and help limit or specify the nouns they precede. This class of words would also include possessive and demonstrative adjectives. Examples include *a*, *the*, *your*, *this*, *each*, *several*, *some*.

Quantifiers?

As long as we have stepped in these waters—let's finish it with quantifiers. They are simply words that precede nouns that give some indication of how many or how much of a noun we are talking about. Examples include *few*, *little*, *many*, *much*, *a lot*, *several*. Quantifiers are typically classified as determiners. In a system in which determiners are not used, quantifiers would typically be classified as adjectives.

Section 2

What are Adjectives?

Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. They give us more information about them.

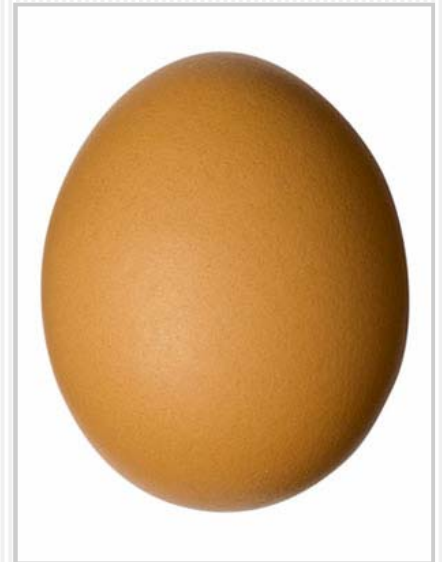
She is hungry. The big red car is beautiful.

Possessive adjectives do that by telling us who the noun belongs to:
It is my car.

Demonstrative adjectives do it by telling us which nouns we are talking about: *I want those pencils.*

Adjectives are sometimes said to modify or limit nouns. They modify or limit them by making it more clear which one or how many are being talked about:
I want only one large egg.

In classification systems with only eight parts of speech, articles are classified as adjectives.



2.2 Classify These Words

Write the name of the part of speech on the blank line.
Be as specific as possible, name more than one class if possible.
(answers are below)

1. I'd like those eggs, please. _____
2. Who did that? _____
3. Many students don't enjoy studying. _____
4. That's my car. _____
5. Our football team won the game. _____
6. San Francisco is a beautiful city. _____
7. He did it himself. _____
8. The cat in the hat. _____

1. demonstrative adjective 2. interrogative pronoun 3. quantifier/adjective 4. possessive adjective
5. collective noun 6. proper noun 7. intensive or emphatic pronoun 8. article, determiner, adjective